



Maryland Retired School Personnel Association

CONSUMER CONNECTION

A Publication of the MRSPA Consumer Education Committee

July-August, 2022

## Are You Traveling This Summer? Gas prices are high! Use these tips to save on gas....

- Join a gas station rewards program
- Get a warehouse club membership
- Use GasBuddy.com or other gas price comparison tools
- Carpool whenever it's convenient
- Maximize your regular routes
- Drive with fuel efficiency in mind
- Buy a more fuel-efficient car on your next car replacement cycle.
- Keep your car tires properly inflated—making sure your tires are properly inflated can **boost gas mileage by 3%** according to the US Department of Energy. At current prices that could **save you about 15 cents per gallon.**



- Drive the speed limit—especially on the freeway. Fuel economy drops sharply once you start driving faster than 50 mph.
- Ease up on acceleration—“Jackrabbit starts” - when a car lurches forward very quickly are a major gas waster.
- Consider bicycles, public transit and electric vehicles.

**Flying??? TSA recommends 2 hours in advance of domestic flights and 3 hours in advance of international flights. Pack your patience!**

**Happy and safe travels this summer!!!**

### 2021-2022 MRSPA CONSUMER EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Chairperson - Phyllis Cherry, Anne Arundel County - *Connection* Editor

Area I East - Nancy Gordon, Frederick County

Area II South - Dr. Norma Martof, Brenda Barnes,

Area I West - Nancy Jean Martin, Washington Co.

Lorraine Johnson, Prince George's County

Area II North - Phyllis Cherry, Anne Arundel Co

Area III North - Bonnie Dixon, Queen Anne's Co.

Area III South - John Sisson, Worcester Co.

## Home Savings Tips....

- **Weatherproof your home.** Caulk holes and cracks that let warm air escape in the winter and cool air escape in the summer. Your local hardware store has materials and can offer advice.
- **Keep the sun out.** Keep your blinds or curtains closed during hot summer days. Blocking the sunlight really does help keep your house cooler.
- **Use less water.** Install low-flow shower-heads and faucet aerators to reduce your water usage and water costs.
- **Cut laundry detergent.** Many laundry detergents on the market sold today are highly concentrated. Be sure to use the smallest suggested amount. Making laundry detergent is said to be relatively cheap and easy, especially if you prefer to use greener, natural products.
- **Go natural.** Speaking of making laundry detergent, using everyday items you already have around your home to clean works for many. You'd be surprised what you can do with vinegar and lemon!
- **Lower the temperature in your water heater to 120 degrees.** For every 10 degree reduction in temperature, you can save up to 5 percent on water heating costs.
- **Ditch the paper:** Cutting out paper towels and using cloths and napkins that you can simply wash and reuse is a simple way to save.
- **Don't forget about coupons!** Sunday newspapers still have coupons and check online sites for things that you use the most. Using loyalty cards at grocery stores and pharmacies can really stack up the savings!



**Don't forget....Maryland's "Tax Free Week" begins on Sunday, August 14th and continues thru Saturday, August 20th!**

**Tax free deals on clothing, diapers, footwear (up to \$100), backpacks and bookbags up to \$40.**

**Check out the bountiful produce from your local Farmers' Market. Help out our farmers and get it direct for the freshest summer flavor! Go to [www.marylandsbest.net](http://www.marylandsbest.net) for the list of farmers' markets near you.**



---

## Ways to Prevent Slips, Trips and Falls as you continue enjoying the Summer.....

1. **Stay cool and hydrated.** When we get hot, our body temperature can rise or we can get dehydrated. Long trips can also dry us out. You can become dizzy or disoriented. Drink water **before** you feel thirsty and plan outdoor activities early in the day.
2. **Watch your step.** Summer activities often involve unfamiliar locations and terrain. Go slow and watch for steep inclines that can throw off balance and increase exertion. Keep eyes peeled for holes and loose dirt that can cause a tumble. Be careful on pool decks or slippery surfaces.
3. **Choose smart shoes.** Flip-flops and sandals are more stylish and comfortable in warm weather, but they can be a danger. Make sure summer footwear is sturdy, secure and appropriate for the conditions (and your outfit).
4. **Keep a weather eye.** Summer thunderstorms create slick surfaces and scatter areas with branches and debris, increasing the risk for slips and falls outside. Walk carefully on wet surfaces, avoid standing water and pick up storm debris as quickly as possible to reduce hazards. Stay alert for wet areas in entryways.



---

## Stay safe from illness-causing bugs this summer...



Get rid of standing water outside.

Apply insect repellent. DEET-infused spray or lotion work the best. Lyme disease typically begins with rash/fever. Get it treated right away! Pets are also very vulnerable and should be treated right away.

# SUMMER SAFETY CHECKLIST

## AT THE BEACH

- DON'T DIVE IN THE OCEAN AS ITS DEPTH CAN'T BE JUDGED
- BE AWARE OF SANDBARS
- SWIM IN DESIGNATED AREAS SUPERVISED BY A LIFEGUARD
- BE AWARE OF SIGNS AT THE BEACH SIGNALING ROUGH WATERS OR OTHER DANGERS

## IN THE POOL

- DO NOT DIVE IN WATER HEADFIRST - ENTER FEET FIRST
- AVOID ALCOHOL AND DRUGS WHILE SWIMMING AS THEY CAN IMPAIR JUDGMENT
- SWIM ONLY WHEN LIFEGUARDS AND LIFESAVING EQUIPMENT ARE AVAILABLE
- MAKE SURE YOU USE COAST GUARD-APPROVED LIFEJACKETS IF YOU NEED A FLOTATION DEVICE
- NEVER SWIM ALONE
- IF YOU ARE WITH CHILDREN, DESIGNATE AN ADULT AS THE "WATCHER"





## Signs of heatstroke:

**Weakness, cold or clammy skin, delirium, fatigue, nausea or vomiting, headache and convulsions. Have the symptoms? Get out of the heat and to an emergency room or urgent care right away! Left untreated, heatstroke can lead to permanent medical problems, or death.**

---

**Are you traveling in an unfamiliar area this summer? Be aware of your surroundings!**

**Law enforcement warns about robberies.** Purse snatchings are up. Don't walk down the street with a shoulder purse to the street side. "Fanny packs" are back in style because they provide more security when carrying your valuables. If carrying a purse, keep it close to your body and be aware of people around you.

**Pedestrian accidents are also up** when people are sightseeing and not paying attention to traffic and surroundings. While walking, be aware, pay attention and stay off the phone.



---

**Are you REAL ID compliant?  
Marylanders will need to be compliant  
by March 2023.**

The fact sheet on the next page will help you prepare. Contact your local Motor Vehicle office for times/appointments needed to access these services.



# What is REAL ID?

For Marylanders

## Federal REAL ID Is Here: Are You Ready?

REAL ID is federal legislation created in the wake of the September 11th terrorist attacks to establish security standards for all state driver's licenses and identification cards nationwide. After May 3, 2023, you will be required to have a REAL ID compliant driver's license or ID card in order to use your driver's license or ID card to board commercial aircraft for domestic flights or to gain access to federal facilities. To be considered REAL ID compliant, you must have the new REAL ID license as well as the required documents on file with the Maryland Department of Transportation Motor Vehicle Administration (MDOT MVA). Customers are encouraged to make an appointment on the MDOT MVA website, and after collecting documentation visit a local branch to become REAL ID compliant.



## HOW do I know if I need to submit REAL ID documents?

Check your REAL ID status by visiting our website and entering your driver's license/ID card number: <https://realid.mva.maryland.gov>. Please note MDOT MVA will contact you regarding REAL ID through email and/or the U.S. Postal Service.

## WHAT type of documentation is needed for REAL ID?

*\*\*The REAL ID Modernization Act has changed some proof of social security documentation requirements for customers. If you need to provide REAL ID documents, please visit our REAL ID Lookup Tool to determine what documents you will need to bring to your next appointment.\*\**

Customers will need to present the following documents in person at an MDOT MVA branch. Here are some of the most commonly used documents:

### 1 proof of age and identity

#### SUCH AS:

- Original Birth Certificate
- Passport (valid or expired less than 5 years).

### 1 proof of social security

#### SUCH AS:

- Original Social Security Card
- W-2 Form
- SSA-1099 Form

### 2 proofs of Maryland residency

#### SUCH AS:

- Vehicle Registration Card
- Bank Account Statement
- Utility Bill

A full list of acceptable documents and exceptions can be viewed in the MDOT MVA's Online Document Guide: [www.mva.maryland.gov/odg](http://www.mva.maryland.gov/odg)

## Make an appointment for REAL ID

To make an appointment for REAL ID you must visit and complete the Online Document Guide: [www.mva.maryland.gov/odg](http://www.mva.maryland.gov/odg). Once you've completed the guide, you will be prompted to make an appointment for your REAL ID visit. With an appointment, you are guaranteed to be seen in 15 minutes. If you have made an appointment, be sure to look for our **appointment check in** signage when you arrive at MDOT MVA.

LEARN MORE: [www.mva.maryland.gov/realid](http://www.mva.maryland.gov/realid)